

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

02 March 2000

Projects Reviewed

S.E.A. (Street Edge Alternatives) Streets
1515 Yesler Way
Harborview Medical Center Master Plan
Light Rail Review Panel Update

Convened: 11:00 am

Adjourned: 3:00 pm

Commissioners Present

Rick Sundberg
Moe Batra
Ralph Cipriani
Gail Dubrow
Jeff Girvin
Nora Jaso
Jack Mackie
Cary Moon

Staff Present

John Rahaim
Layne Cubell
Kelly Walker
Rebecca Walls

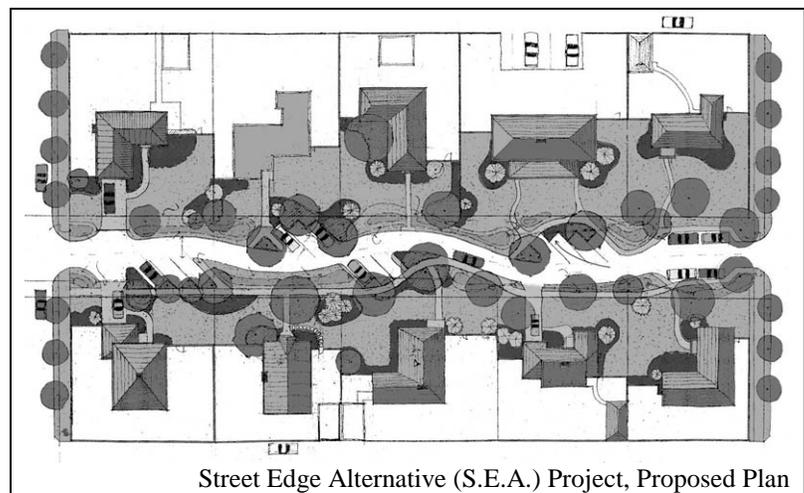
030200.1 Project: **S.E.A. (Street Edge Alternatives) Streets**
 Phase: Briefing
 Previous Review: 04 November 1999, 03 June 1999
 Presenters: John Arneson
 Shane Dewald
 Attendees: Peter Aylsworth, CityDesign
 Sam Bennett, Daily Journal of Commerce
 Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign
 Susan Dehlendorf, Department of Neighborhoods
 Time: .75 hour (SDC Ref. # DC00062)

Action: **The Commission appreciates the presentation and makes the following comments and recommendations.**

- **The Commission thanks the team for coming once again and continues to be very supportive of the Street Edge Alternatives (S.E.A.) Streets Project;**
- **looks forward to seeing the project again and reviewing the contextual logic, especially if it should go forward on a city-wide scale;**
- **urges the team to provide educational information to the community to help them understand the meaning and significance of these types of projects; and**
- **would like to evaluate the project again when it is completed in another year or so.**

The current S.E.A. Streets Project is located within the Piper's Creek Watershed on Second Avenue Northwest between Northwest 120th and 117th Streets.

The project team presented their revised concept for the street design and drainage system. The proposal includes a continuous curvilinear, 14-foot two way roadway with 18-foot intersections and no curb on either side of the street; 23 angled parking spaces will also be provided. The "undulating" and narrow form of the street will work to calm traffic.



A series of vegetative swales that drain along the edge of the road will maintain adequate growth to catch debris before it is able to move into the pipes. Flow regulators and catch basin structures will work to manage the water levels; the latter will incorporate an overflow pipe that will support a six-month flood period.

The maintenance of the street will be the responsibility of its residents who will also be involved in the construction process. To this end, the team facilitated two resident comment periods to carefully determine the communities needs and desires for the project.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

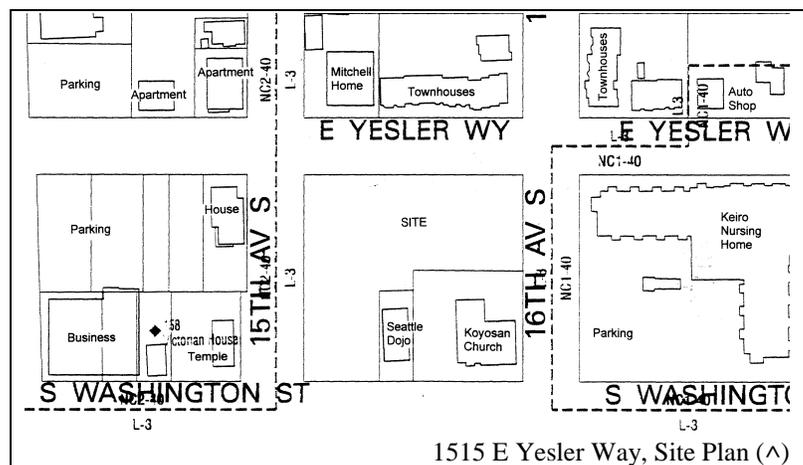
- Would like to know how the team determined that the proposed undulating street is appropriate for the site and how they will identify similar opportunities in the greater city.
 - Proponents stated that the initial motivation was to relieve pressure on the creek system. After reviewing a number of viable locations for the experimental street, they narrowed their choices down to two sites within the Piper’s Creek Watershed before choosing the Second Avenue site as the best option.
- Feels that this is the most commendable project in the city and that it holds the potential to make neighborhoods more livable. Stated that undulating streets are a common practice in residential neighborhoods and that they promote traffic calming. Feels that any concerns about a wide-spread application of this type of proposal are driven primarily by the perceived need to move automobiles efficiently. Stated that vehicular efficiency is not a logical goal for residential streets where pedestrian safety is of paramount importance. Feels that the project will enhance the neighborhood.
- Feels that it is important to have this street built and that components of the project could be used selectively for other streets.
- Similarly suggested that the design should be considered a “kit-of-parts” that could be drawn upon rather than an inflexible formula that may not apply in all cases. Also suggested that the team make a concerted effort to convey a learned understanding of the drainage system and unique qualities of the street to the community through brochures and signage.
- Would like to know if Seattle Transportation (SEATRAN) has commented on the narrow 14-foot width of the street.
 - Proponent stated that SEATRAN designed the street and that some residents have also chosen to eliminate a total of three parking spaces in an effort to maximize plantings. Also indicated that the Seattle Fire and Police Departments are currently reviewing the plans for the street and have been very supportive thus far.
- Would like to know how the team determined the regular placement of the streetlights.
 - Proponents stated that the existing streetlights will remain where they are but that a lighting engineer will evaluate the type of lighting that will be used.
- Would like to know how the project will be conveyed to the general public.
 - Proponents indicated that an evaluation process is underway and that it will continue once construction is completed. There will also be an assessment report developed through the first or second year of the post-construction period. Additionally, the team intends to update their project brochure.
- Would like to know the breadth of the plant palette that the team will draw up.
 - Proponents stated that they have a more than diverse variety of vegetation at their disposal.
- Would like to know the length of the street and cost of the project.
 - Proponents stated that the street is 650 linear feet and that the project will cost between \$700,000 and \$800,000.

030200.2 Project: **1515 Yesler Way**
 Phase: Conceptual
 Presenters: Ken Kubota, Architects Kubota Kato Chin
 Jane Rennie, Department of Design Construction and Land Use
 Attendees: Barb Gregory, The Seneca Real Estate Group
 Catherine Kanda, Nikkei Concerns
 John Kennedy, Executive Services Department, Real Property
 Darlene Suyematsu
 Time: .75 hour (SDC Ref. # DC00159)

Action: The Commission appreciates the presentation and makes the following comments and recommendations.

- The Commission supports the preferred concept and the requested departure for the building width given the successful address of massing issues and façade modulation;
- supports the consolidation of the open space at the north end of the site and near the existing park across the street and will look for detailed development of this component in the next stage;
- encourages the team to reinforce and enhance the pedestrian and residential character of the neighborhood with streetscape amenities and landscaping, especially on Yesler Way;
- would like to see details of how the departure will be treated; and
- supports the alternatives for the driveway to reduce the width and to minimize its presence on the street and other qualitative goals related to the open space and adjacent properties.

The steep site is an “L” shaped vacant parcel located on East Yesler Way between 15th & 16th Avenues South, and South Washington Street, in the southernmost part of the First Hill Neighborhood. The site has an area of approximately 40,918 square feet and is zoned Lowrise-3 (L-3) under the City of Seattle’s Land Use Code. (Project Description from the Department of Design Construction and Land Use’s (DCLU) “Design Guideline Priorities of East-Central Seattle Design Review Board, 01 September 1999.”)



The architect is seeking a departure for the width of the building (which the code does not allow to exceed 75 feet) as part of the preferred concept.

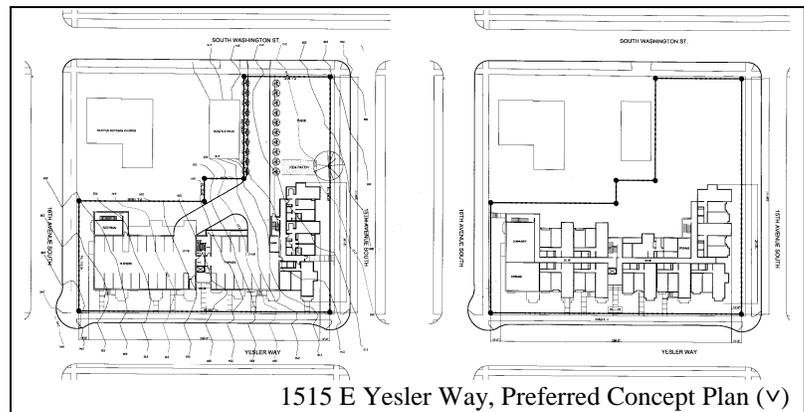
The Design Review Board (DRB) has been concerned with the project’s relationship to Yesler Way, as the quickly changing neighborhood would like new projects to generate ample interest. Further, the

program incorporates 22 residential units and the DRB is concerned about the “perceived” level of density. Additionally, the DRB is promoting ground related housing and would like the team to look at the design of the site as it relates to a nearby park. Also of concern are the potential security impacts of the surface parking and elevated walkway. In a meeting held the evening before, the DRB expressed their general support of the “preferred concept” over the “code compliant concept,” and the proposed relationship between the Yesler Way façade, the residential units and the underground parking. Outstanding issues include details of the driveway; the building’s relationship to the intersection; and they would like to insure that the modulation and design details are consistent with the neighborhood.

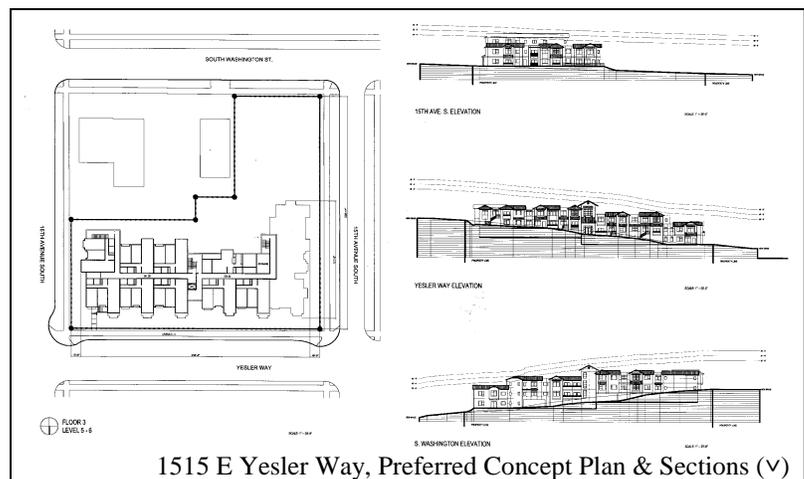
Yesler Way is a designated pedestrian street in the Community Plan and there are some corresponding territorial view issues. In an effort to address community concerns, the architects have placed more of the units along the Yesler Way frontage. Currently the site holds bad soil that will be removed to make way for underground parking. The building will be fully accessible and will include a community room with a dedicated entrance and a potential corresponding plaza.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Likes the way the preferred concept consolidates and maximizes the open space and lends a level of vitality to the pedestrian corridor. Also feels that the project sets a precedent for the opposite side of the block to develop in a similar way in the future. Further indicated that the underground parking is beneficial in that it minimizes the impact of the automobile on the streetscape.
- Feels that the project adds to and reinforces the existing texture and rhythm of the neighborhood.
- Feels that the public benefit the project will bring to the street edge is clearly evident.
 - A representative from the DRB indicated that they feel that the preferred concept is markedly better than the one previously presented and that they support the departure. The DRB was pleased to see the team’s efforts toward a “code



1515 E Yesler Way, Preferred Concept Plan (✓)



1515 E Yesler Way, Preferred Concept Plan & Sections (✓)

compliant concept” in addition to a “preferred concept.”

- Would like to know if the team is complying with the code with regards to the width and design of the driveway.
 - Proponent indicated that while the team was adhering to the code, that it had been suggested that they might want to seek a departure in an effort to consistently maximize the open space.
- Agrees with the proponent and feels that the Commission should consider supporting a departure for the driveway.
- Would like to know if there is a passenger drop-off area on Yesler Way.
 - Proponent stated that this would be an issue based on a need that does not currently exist, as street parking is not an issue and the roads are typically uncongested.

030200.3

COMMISSION BUSINESS

- A. Ethics Commission Briefing / Van Noy
- B. Timesheets
- C. Minutes from 17 February 2000
- D. Magnuson Park Design Workshop 25 March, 8:30 – 12:30, Building 406 / Cubell
- E. Harborview Medical Center Hearing Examiner Date, 03–05 April
- F. Downtown Wayfinding Project Phase III, 22 March, 3:00 – 5:00, Key Tower, Room 4070
- G. Galer Street Flyover Public Art Committee Meeting, 22 February / Mackie
- H. Seattle University Skybridge Follow Up / Rahaim
- I. DRB Updates / Walls
- J. Consultant Selection Panel Updates / Cubell
- K. Lincoln Reservoir / Rahaim

ACTION ITEMS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISCUSSION ITEMS

030200.4 Project: **Harborview Medical Center Master Plan**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenter: Malli Anderson, Department of Design Construction and Land Use
 Elise Chayet, Harborview Medical Center
 Attendees: Geri Beardsley, Legislative Department
 Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign
 Patrick Doherty, Department of Design Construction and Land Use
 Karen Gordon, Department of Neighborhoods
 Marilyn Senour, Seattle Transportation

 Time: 1.0 hour (SDC Ref. # DC00134)

Action: None.

The original Major Institution Master Plan (MIMP), that received conceptual approval of the previously presented skybridge, is still in effect. The Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC) recently met to finalize their report on the MIMP; the Department of Design Construction and Land Use (DCLU) has completed their Director’s Report; and the Landmarks Board’s Process Report will be filed next week.

The CAC and DCLU felt that it was important to preserve the residential edges around the site and to confine the campus to a designated area. Further, the CAC accepted the argument that Harborview Hall is seismically unsound and support the proposal to demolish it and maintain the open space with an underground garage below. A Letter of Decision, that references the Design Commission’s concerns, and the CAC report will both be presented to the Hearing Examiner.

Additionally, the team stated that the design of the Trauma Center expansion is stylistically consistent with the original building and existing campus architecture, as is the design for other new campus buildings along Ninth Avenue.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know what commitments are being made to preservation in the project.
 - A representative from the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) indicated that if any of the historic buildings are approved for nomination as a landmark building, that the project team has the option to submit a formal request to the Landmarks Board to demolish the building if the need and argument exists.
- Would like to know if the MIMP makes any provisions for historic preservation.
 - Proponent indicated that the EIS determined that Harborview Hall is historically significant and that they have made a commitment to complete the Landmarks’ process. At the same time, this does not preclude the potential for demolition of the Hall.
- Feels that the proposal serves the needs of the internal functions of the Medical Center rather than providing a public benefit. Correspondingly, the demolition of Harborview Hall would contribute to the erosion of any existing public benefit.
- Would like to know what the Design Commission’s options are for making an Action.
 - Proponent stated that the Commission could express their concerns and make a recommendation to the Hearing Examiner or testify before Council.

- Would like to know if the team considered other locations for the extensive Medical Center during the original MIMP process, rather than presuming to add on to the chosen one, piecemeal overtime. Feels that large institutions like Harborview do not adhere to the rules of good urban design and are setting a bad precedent.
- Feels that the scale of the proposed skybridge is overwhelming on the neighborhood street and also feels that it would set a bad precedent.
- Questioned the City's review and permitting process and feels that they should not review projects like these until the questionable issues are resolved. Reiterated that the DCLU representative stated that the new buildings match the Art Deco style of the existing campus architecture and feels that unless the proposal aims to preserve the historic buildings, the new structures won't have a guiding historic style or context to match. Would like to see a condition that historic buildings that are declared to be significant, be preserved.
- Would like to know if community issues are addressed in the MIMP beyond their relationship to the Medical Center; does not see a stated relationship to anything other than the interior of the campus.
- Stated that in order for the street vacation to be approved, the Commission needs to see evidence of a public benefit beyond the client pool. Reiterated that the Commission had asked to see alternatives to the proposed skybridge structure and a response to why it is considered the optimum solution.
- Stated that the Design Commission's jurisdiction is to make a recommendation on street vacations that are in the public right-of-way. In this case, is concerned that Council conceptually approved the street vacation by way of the MIMP and feels that the Commission needs to look for a way to influence the same.
 - Proponent stated that as presented to the Design Commission in December 1999, they consider the open space that would be gained by the demolition of Harborview Hall as a public benefit and a fair trade for the requested street vacation.

The Commission appreciates and thanks the team for the briefing on the Master Plan and looks forward to future presentations.

030200.5 Project: **Light Rail Review Panel Update**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenter: Cheryl Sizov, CityDesign
 Time: .5 hour (SDC Ref. # DC00014)

Action: The Commission appreciates the briefing and looks forward to future updates.

Cheryl Sizov of the Light Rail Review Panel (LRRP) presented a schematic design update on new stations; seven of the nine proposed station designs have been approved.

The Edmunds and McClellan station designs were not approved. McClellan poses real problems in that only an elevated scheme was proposed even though LRRP requested exploration of an at-grade and below-grade alternative. LRRP feels that the proposal presents significant urban design issues. The Edmunds station was not approved because the design did not yet reflect the station as double-end loaded. The Royal Brougham and Lander stations need additional work on their platforms, entrances and canopies.

The next steps will involve a City permitting process that will include requirements to address design guidelines prepared by LRRP.